



# *The Rip Tide*



The Bi-monthly E-newsletter of the New Hampshire Coastal Program

September 2006

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## NEWS



[“Guess How Many Butts” Event Coming Soon](#)

[Bugs Have a Story to Tell About Water Quality](#)

[Exeter River Watershed Program Projects on Course](#)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



[Red Carpet Welcome for Green Giant](#)

[Grant Funding Available for Conservation Projects](#)

[Grant Funding Available for Restoration](#)

[Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program Request for Proposals](#)

[Volunteers Wanted to Survey Salt Marshes for “Sudden Wetland Dieback”](#)

[UNH Stormwater Center 2006 Workshops](#)

[State of the Estuaries Conference](#)

[Calendar of Events Available on Website](#)



## NEW PUBLICATIONS & PLANNING TOOLS



[Great Bay Estuarine Resource Compendium, new restoration tool saves time and addresses priority issues](#)

[GIS Land Cover and Change Maps for the Northeast, NOAA website complements existing data](#)

[Hurricane Preparations Websites, online information available](#)

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## NEWS

### ■ “Guess How Many Butts” Event Coming Soon ■

NHCP will host the "Guess How Many Butts" event as part of this year's annual International Coastal Cleanup Day on September 16 at the Hampton Sea Shell. Last year over 50,000 butts were collected on International Coastal Cleanup day, a worldwide coastal clean-up celebrated locally in New Hampshire.

The “Guess How Many Butts” event will test your estimating skill while helping to raise awareness about the problem with cigarette butts left on the ground. Cigarette butts are the most common item found during beach cleanups in New Hampshire. They are not just unsightly litter; they are also a danger to wildlife, a health hazard to people, and pollutants of our waters and soils.

Event participants will predict how many cigarette butts are inside a jug, and the three closest guessers win one of these great prizes;

- 1st prize - Surfing lesson, including wetsuit and board rentals from Cinnamon Rainbows of Hampton.
- 2nd prize - Family membership to the Seacoast Science Center.
- 3rd prize - Passage for two on a UNH Discovery Cruise to the Isles of Shoals aboard The Gulf Challenger.

The event begins at 1:30 p.m. and winners will be announced at 2 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

This summer, state and private campaign partners reminded beachgoers to dispose of their cigarette butts properly in designated receptacles, not the sand. Partners also hoped to motivate people to carry out all of their trash instead of leaving it on the beach. New Hampshire State Parks has a "Carry-in Carry-Out" trash policy in all their parks, including Seacoast beaches. For more information about cigarette butts in our coastal watershed and the “Carry It-Don’t Bury



**This stormdrain reveals thousands of cigarette butts, the most common type of litter found anywhere.**

It” Campaign, visit

[www.des.nh.gov/coastal/CIDBI/](http://www.des.nh.gov/coastal/CIDBI/).

The Blue Ocean Society is coordinating this year's International Coastal Cleanup in New Hampshire with grant funding provided by NHCP. The Blue Ocean Society coordinates volunteer efforts to clean up trash and other marine debris at over 20 sites on the Seacoast.

For more information on how to participate in the cleanup visit [www.blueoceansociety.org/coastal/cleanup](http://www.blueoceansociety.org/coastal/cleanup) or contact Jen Kennedy at (603) 431-0260. The International Coastal Cleanup Day was begun by the Ocean Conservancy 20 years ago on a beach in Texas, and has grown to a worldwide event.

NHCP would like to thank the Stateline Environmental and Community Action Team (SEACAT) for collecting cigarette butts for the “Guess How Many Butts” Event and for their extraordinary efforts to pick up butts and other litter in the Seacoast. Learn more about SEACAT at <http://seacatnews.com>.

[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Bugs Have a Story to Tell about Water Quality ■



**Matt Russell and John Henson help collect macroinvertebrates.**

NHCP kicks off a second season of monitoring coastal watersheds with its Coastal Volunteer Biological Assessment Program (CVBAP). From late August to October, volunteers from

local watershed groups sample data from rivers and streams on macroinvertebrates, or living organisms without a backbone that can be seen with the naked eye.

“Biomonitoring is an exciting and interactive sampling method that involves outdoor field work and bug sorting,” said Liz Durfee, CVBAP Coordinator.

Volunteers from the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee, Cocheco River Watershed Coalition, and Oyster River Watershed Association will become experts in stream dwelling invertebrate identification. Additionally, each group will receive a written report of the biomonitoring results, helping to contribute to an overall understanding of their local watersheds, or the area of land where water follows the same drainage patterns into rivers, lakes and streams.

Lab and field training sessions were held in August for each watershed group’s volunteers.

Last year, volunteers from the Cocheco River Watershed Coalition sampled throughout the Cocheco River Watershed at ten sites, mostly located in Rochester and Farmington. This summer CVBAP takes on two additional watershed groups, the Oyster

River Watershed Association and the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee. These groups will sample at 18 sites in and around the Oyster River and Exeter River, respectively.

Biomonitoring incorporates the cumulative effects of water pollution while the results of a single water sample are limited to that specific date and time. Each macroinvertebrate species has a different ability to withstand certain degrees of pollution or poor water quality. Tolerant macroinvertebrates can thrive in



**Exeter River Local Advisory Committee participants learn biomonitoring techniques.**

polluted conditions while the intolerant are more sensitive. For example, mayflies, stoneflies and caddisflies struggle to survive in polluted waters, while midges and aquatic worms are often found in these conditions.

“The beauty of the bugs is that they live there all the time. What you find gives you the big picture of what’s going on with the water,” said Sally Soule, NHCP Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Coordinator.

[Back to Cover Page](#)



## ■ Exeter River Projects on Course ■

### *Program Partners Release Status Report*

The Exeter River Study Committee, made up of representatives from the town of Exeter and other agencies and groups, has released a report outlining the background, partner roles and accomplishments of four inter-related projects coined the Exeter River Watershed Program. The report comes approximately a year after two public information sessions were held on the Exeter River Study and a public hearing was held on the Lake Level Investigation Study, two of the projects discussed in the report.



**Exeter River, Brentwood**

Major highlights in the summary include a discussion of the consultant's findings in the Exeter River Study, which looks at water quality and quantity in and around Great Dam. This information will also contribute to the Lake Level Investigation, which examines the level of the

impoundment that can be set based on weather conditions, the need for water supply, the flooding concerns around the impoundment, and wildlife impacts.

For years, degrading water quality, declining fish populations, and other issues possibly related to the Great Dam have been steadily building on one another. The Exeter River Watershed Program goal is

to develop management plans that bring together science and policy to address these multiple issues. This is important because looking at them individually could actually result in making one or more of them worse, according to NHCP Manager Ted Diers.

“The real challenge is to find a solution that will increase the safety of the dam, control flooding, address the water quality of the Exeter River and provide enough water for both humans and fish. I am quite impressed at the leadership of the town taking such a comprehensive approach to this project,” said Diers.

Although the initial focus of the Exeter Watershed Program is the Great Dam, a larger, more comprehensive watershed approach is planned. These program components, the Exeter River Watershed Restoration Plan and Biomonitoring Study, are also discussed in the report.

“We hope that this joint effort will become part of a watershed-wide management program for the entire Exeter River, where all of the towns can work together to protect and use the river effectively,” said Lionel Ingram, Exeter River Study Committee Chair.

Project partners, including Department of Environmental Services' Coastal Program, Watershed Assistance Section and Dam Bureau, New Hampshire Fish and Game, town of Exeter, Exeter River Study Committee, Exeter River Local Advisory Committee, and Rockingham Planning Commission, have all contributed money and staff expertise to the projects.

The program summary report is available at the Exeter Town Library and Town Hall, as well as the town website. View the summary at [town.exeter.nh.us/river%20study/riveraug.pdf](http://town.exeter.nh.us/river%20study/riveraug.pdf).

[Back to Cover Page](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ■ Red Carpet Welcome for Green Giant ■

At 29 feet long and 20 tons, it's not your typical new arrival.

The Hampton Department of Public Works has improved maintenance of the town's 2,200 stormdrains with help from their newly acquired vac truck.

This state-of-the-art equipment arrived in Hampton in August and cleans out stormdrains by removing cigarette butts, trash, leaves, sand, bacteria, and other solid and liquid debris. With shallow sumps that catch many of these pollutants, stormdrains are a direct feed to waterbodies, untreated pollutants included.



**Mary Power, NHCP, and Doug Mellin, Hampton DPW, with the new vac truck.**

Stormwater is one of the leading causes of water pollution both nationally and in New Hampshire and is regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act. Since March 2003, municipalities and developers have been subject to new requirements dealing with stormwater management. The new requirements are called Phase II Storm Water Regulations, since they are the second round of stormwater rules implemented by EPA. One goal of the town of Hampton as a Phase II community is to increase the frequency of stormdrain cleanings.

Prior to the arrival of the vac truck, the Hampton DPW utilized an outdated machine to clean the town's more than 2,200 stormdrains. Due to the equipment's limitations, the DPW could only clean an average of 10 structures per day, and it took five to six years to clean all of them. The DPW can now clean up to 30 structures per day and can clean all stormdrains in town within a three-year rotation. In addition, the town now plans to clean the drains in sensitive areas, such as the areas discharging to Hampton Harbor and salt marshes, once a year.

NHCP contributed \$50,000 towards the vac truck's purchase through its competitive grant program.

[Back to Cover Page](#)

### ■ Grant Funding Available for Conservation Projects ■

The State Conservation Committee is seeking grant applications from towns, cities, nonprofits, and other organizations engaged in natural resource conservation projects. Approximately \$200,000 is available for the 2007 grant round. Applications are due no later than November 17, 2006. For further information, including the full media release and application, visit [www.mooseplate.com/grants/sccgrant/NHSCCgrant.html](http://www.mooseplate.com/grants/sccgrant/NHSCCgrant.html).



[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Grant Funding Available for Restoration ■

The NHCP and New Hampshire Estuaries Project are seeking proposals for on-the-ground restoration projects in the Great Bay Watershed from state and government agencies, municipalities and nonprofit groups. Applicants can apply for up to \$120,000 in federal funding. At least a 20 percent match is required. A letter of intent by September 15, 2006 is strongly suggested. The deadline for the proposals is November 1, 2006. Using the [Great Bay Estuarine Restoration Compendium](#) is recommended. For more information on eligibility requirements and to view sample proposals, visit [www.nhep.unh.edu/](http://www.nhep.unh.edu/). Contact Phil Trowbridge, NHEP coastal scientist, at (603) 271-8872 or [ptrowbridge@des.state.nh.us](mailto:ptrowbridge@des.state.nh.us) with questions.



[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program Request for Proposals FFY08 ■

The request for proposals is intended to provide information to NOAA on the land protection projects that are available for funding in New Hampshire's [coastal watershed](#) for FFY08. The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), which was established in 2002 by Sen. Judd Gregg in coordination with state and federal land experts, gives priority to lands that can be effectively managed and that have significant ecological value.

Applicants must be a qualified entity (eligible state or local unit of government). A 1:1 match is required. Applicants should submit separate complete proposals for each individual project. There is no limit to the number of project proposals an applicant can submit. The NHCP will send three projects to NOAA to compete nationally.



The due date for all proposals is 4 p.m., October 10, 2006.

For detailed project and applicant eligibility requirements and how to apply please visit [www.des.nh.gov/coastal/CoastalEstuarine.html](http://www.des.nh.gov/coastal/CoastalEstuarine.html)

[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Volunteers Wanted to Survey New Hampshire's Salt Marshes for Dieback ■



*Salicornia europaea*, or common glasswort, is a common salt marsh plant.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NHCP are seeking volunteers to survey local salt marshes for "Sudden Wetland Dieback," or SWD. SWD is the rapid death of salt marsh plants. Its cause is unknown, and this project will help researchers determine the extent of SWD in New Hampshire.

During the training, volunteers will learn the telltale signs of dieback, and then, armed with aerial photographs, maps and cameras, explore a Seacoast marsh for SWD. Salt marsh ecologists will make follow-up visits to each potential dieback location.



This field survey will help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service document the occurrence of SWD in northern New England. SWD cannot be explained by any of the typical causes of vegetation loss in salt marshes, such as debris, ice, or grazing by birds or animals. Concern over this phenomenon has grown from Louisiana to Maine, but the extent of its existence in New Hampshire is unknown.

**What:** Sudden Wetland Dieback Training and Survey  
**When:** September 23, 2006; 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
**Where:** DES Portsmouth Field Office, Pease Tradeport, 50 International Drive, Portsmouth, N.H.  
**Bring:** Drinking water, a bag lunch, knee-boots, and dress for the weather. Camera and GPS optional.

The workshop is free, but registration is recommended. To register and for more information, please call Beth Lambert, New Hampshire Coastal Program, at (603) 559-0022.

To learn more about SWD in New England, visit <http://wetland.neers.org>.

[Back to Cover Page](#)

### ■ UNH Stormwater Center 2006 Workshops ■



This fall, the Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology sponsored Stormwater Center at the University of New Hampshire will host several stormwater technology demonstration workshops. These workshops will take place at the Center's unique field facility, where researchers evaluate the effectiveness of different stormwater treatment systems in a side-by-side setting, under strictly controlled conditions. It is the only test bed of its kind in the nation. The 2006 workshops will consist of a tour of the facility, followed by a working lunch and discussion. Workshops are open to municipal officials, engineers, land planners, landscape architects, and natural resource managers. Please visit [http://ciceet.unh.edu/stats/stormwater\\_conference.html](http://ciceet.unh.edu/stats/stormwater_conference.html) for a list of dates and more information.

[Back to Cover Page](#)

### ■ State of the Estuaries Conference ■

Highlighting the “2006 State of the Estuaries” report, this conference will feature up-to-date information on environmental monitoring, water quality, wildlife, shellfish resources, land use, habitat protection, and habitat restoration occurring in the New Hampshire coastal watershed.

Sponsored by The New Hampshire Estuaries Project, the conference is on October 27, 2006 at the Sheraton Harborside in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Registration is free and lunch will be provided. Check out the agenda at [www.nhep.unh.edu/resources/2006\\_sote/agenda.pdf](http://www.nhep.unh.edu/resources/2006_sote/agenda.pdf). To register call (603)-862-3403, email [Contact.NHEP@unh.edu](mailto:Contact.NHEP@unh.edu), or go to [www.nhep.unh.edu](http://www.nhep.unh.edu).



[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Calendar of Events Available on Website ■



Current events are regularly posted on the online Calendar of Events at [www.des.nh.gov/asp/DESCalendar/](http://www.des.nh.gov/asp/DESCalendar/). Check the Calendar of Events frequently to find new postings. The following are upcoming events of particular interest to coastal folks:

- [“Guess How Many Butts” Event, September 16](#)
- [Sudden Wetlands Dieback Workshop, September 23](#)
- [Salt Marsh Ecology and Conservation, September 29](#)
- [State of the Estuaries Conference, October 27](#)
- [DES Watershed Conference, November 11](#)

[Back to Cover Page](#)

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS & PLANNING TOOLS

### ■ Save Time and Address Priority Restoration Issues with New Restoration Tool ■



Looking for ideas on ecosystem restoration projects in the Great Bay Watershed, but don't know where to start? Check out the Great Bay Estuarine Resource Compendium developed by The Nature Conservancy with funding from the NHCP and New Hampshire Estuaries Project. The Compendium is a tool to help communities and organizations restore eelgrass, salt marsh, diadromous fish, and shellfish in the Great Bay Watershed.

The Compendium has two components: a report and a GIS database. The report provides maps and detailed descriptions on areas of concern to help set future restoration goals and aid project development. With the scientific backing and expertise of years of work compiled in one place, the Compendium saves loads of research time and strengthens project grant proposals.

The GIS database is packed with GIS data on past restoration projects, water quality issues, dam locations, and historic distribution areas for salt marshes, fish and oysters. With ArcView you'll be able to customize your own set of maps by selecting the restoration data most applicable to your projects' needs.

In mid-September, copies of the CD with GIS database and report will be sent out to each coastal community. Visit [www.nhep.unh.edu/resources/pdf/great\\_bay\\_restoration-tnc-06.pdf](http://www.nhep.unh.edu/resources/pdf/great_bay_restoration-tnc-06.pdf) to view the document online without the accompanying GIS layers. Staff from NHCP are available to assist communities in using the Compendium.

[Back to Cover Page](#)

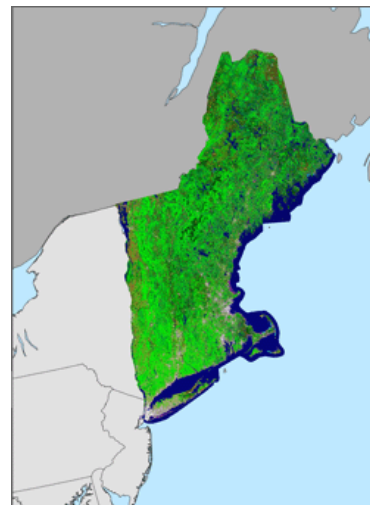


## ■ GIS Land Cover and Change Maps are Available for the Northeast ■

New GIS land cover and change maps are available, free of charge. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Services Center seeks to complement existing data in your region by providing these land-cover maps, circa 2001 and 1996, for the Northeast. The land cover maps available for this region can be downloaded from the following [www.csc.noaa.gov/crs/lca/northeast.html](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/crs/lca/northeast.html).

Contact the NOAA Coastal Services Center or visit [www.csc.noaa.gov/landcover](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/landcover) to learn more about the land-cover mapping program, including examples of how data is used, the data gathering and distribution process, and background information about the program.

Contact Susan Fox at the Coastal Services Center with feedback on your data needs and existing data sources at 843-740-1144 or [susan.fox@noaa.gov](mailto:susan.fox@noaa.gov)



[Back to Cover Page](#)

## ■ Hurricane Preparations Websites ■



As hurricane season ramps up, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is providing information on preparations to make before hurricane force winds or storm flooding are at your doorstep. Local governments and community agencies will find suggestions for preparing and protecting water and wastewater facilities. There is also detailed information for debris planning, because storm debris poses a threat to human health and the environment, and can overwhelm landfills. Visit [www.epa.gov/hurricanes](http://www.epa.gov/hurricanes).

In addition, visit NOAA's National Weather Service National Prediction Center for the latest news on hurricanes and more information on hurricane preparedness at [www.nhc.noaa.gov/](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/).

[Back to Cover Page](#)

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### About this e-newsletter

The Rip Tide is NHCP's bi-monthly e-newsletter.

All subscribers' e-mail addresses on this list are kept confidential and are not shared by NHCP.

Contact Cathy Coletti, editor, at (603) 559-0024 with questions or comments.

### About NHCP

NHCP is a federally approved coastal program authorized under the Coastal Zone Management Act and is administered by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. NHCP strives to maintain a balance between the use and preservation of coastal resources. Through partnerships, funding and science, NHCP works to improve water quality and decision making in 42 coastal watershed communities; supports maritime uses; and restores coastal wetlands.